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- ¹ Given how proudly and consistently Robert Duncan proclaimed himself a “derivative” writer, it’s hardly surprising that in his various projects built around Gertrude Stein he made no bones about explicitly imitating her, bestowing pamphlets or sequences with titles such as “Names of People: Stein Imitations” or “Play Time Pseudo Stein,” and prefacing “Writing Writing” by referring to its contents as “these pieces of writing-like-Stein” (Duncan 2012, 445). So much a part and parcel of his broader “derivative” project, some of these texts even found themselves published in a volume quite simply called *Derivations*, a title which in itself shows that for Duncan, his relationship to Stein was less unique than paradigmatic of his massively intertextual writing practice as a whole. This aspect of Duncan is central to the criticism on him and I do not want to rehearse it here, but I do want to begin by looking at the specific importance, within the history of modernism and what comes after, of deriving explicitly from Gertrude Stein.¹ For, if one believes Wyndham Lewis, Duncan was not the first writer of note to imitate Gertrude. In his long piece “The Dumb Ox” – the lead essay in his 1934 volume *Men Without Art* – Lewis excoriates Ernest Hemingway for exactly what he sees as this failing. Despite Lewis’s self-professed “weakness” for Hemingway, and considerable admiration for his achievement, Lewis refuses to deny a troubling conclusion: Hemingway is not original, but is rather in thrall to a master, whom he imitates. This is bad in and of itself according to Lewis, but it gets worse, for as Lewis pointedly remarks, “his master has been a *mistress*,” and of a particular kind at that. Indeed, she is a mistress who so overmasters Hemingway that his very agency itself is entirely removed: “He [Hemingway] passes over into the category of *those to whom things are done*, from that of those who execute. [...] One might even go so far as to say that this brilliant Jewish lady had made a *clown* of him by teaching Ernest Hemingway her babytalk! So it is a pity” (Lewis 26-7, original italics). Lewis leaves no doubt as to his reading: by imitating Stein, by accepting her as his “mistress,” Hemingway moves from

active to passive, from male to female or from phallic to castrated, and from doer unto others to the one who is always getting done. Last but not least, the neo-Nietzschean undertone to Lewis's harping on Stein's Jewishness very much suggests that Hemingway also shifts from master to slave. This is not altogether a bad thing for Lewis, as he argues that Hemingway's worth lies in nothing other than his ability to express the mentality of modern society's slaves, that is, the herd – a task in fact furthered by his subjugation to Stein, which brings him all the closer to the herd-soul his writing captures.²

- 2 In terms of Duncan's project, Lewis's account of Hemingway and Stein is an especially useful reference point because it displays paradigmatic aspects of modernist ideology in a helpfully crystallised form, and thereby reminds us of the real radicality of Duncan's positions on these issues – positions so close to orthodoxy in the 21st century that their historical force can be too easily forgotten.³ This is of course true of all of Duncan's various divestments of authority, originality, or what he calls "self-possession," but let us note how Duncan's broader conceptions (a term I will choose here over the Olsonian "stance") are all the more pointed in this particular context. That is, where Lewis frets that what is most stylistically distinctive about Hemingway is nothing other than a paradoxical resemblance to Stein, Duncan simply writes "I am not afraid of sounding like Stein" (Duncan 2012, 459). And where Lewis worries that Hemingway has been dominated and castrated by a "mistress," Duncan writes of his relationship to Stein, "It is this kind of submission in love and delight that I make to my mistress. [...] It is by my heart's allegiance that I continue that I may be some day her true disciple" (Duncan 2011, 792). Indeed, he goes so far as to dedicate *Writing Writing*, in a syntax clearly derivative of but different from Stein's own, "For the love of Gertrude Stein in which I labored to write in whose mode" (Duncan 2012, 445). In other words, if Lewis stresses throughout that his interest is above all in the political implications of Hemingway's writing, let us not forget the political import of Duncan's imitations of Stein – an import at once feminist, queer, and liberatory in its refusal of the concepts of mastery and domination altogether. And it is entirely possible that such politics were not only an implicit rebuke from Duncan to these aspects of modernism, but in fact an explicit response to Lewis as well. In a previously unpublished preface for *Writing Writing* now included in the *Collected Early Poems*, Duncan writes: "At times I have barely echoed her [Stein's] manner, fondly mimicked her way. A copy book. For another ape of God" (Duncan 2012, 792).⁴ *The Apes of God*, of course, is Wyndham Lewis's novel of 1930, of which a central burden is nothing other than the propensity of those Lewis sees as *ressentiment*-bound inferiors to express their ambivalence towards their betters through the medium of a slavish yet aggressive imitation – the "aping" of the title. There is every reason to believe that Duncan knew exactly what he was doing, and what abjected subject position he was embracing (one which Lewis incessantly harps on as insufficiently masculine) in his imitative submission to his mistress Stein.

Originality, Gender, Rhetoric, and Myth

- 3 In this way Duncan's various Stein imitations, by virtue of their explicit status as imitations, sit fully within his broader revaluation and revalorisation of modernist writing by women – indeed, his revaluation of a dominant modernist ideology on the relationship between gender, sex, sexuality, and writing – that is at the heart of the *H.D.*

Book, for example, in which Stein hardly figures. As the reference to Lewis shows, these explicit imitations of a woman writer – again by virtue of their avowed status as imitations – place Duncan in pointed opposition to an entire complex of highly invested modernist ideologies. For this reason, although the various “imitations” are of considerable interest formally in the context of Duncan’s work, it would be wrong to read them solely as formal experiments or exercises, in which Duncan tries out some of Stein’s techniques. While this is of course extremely important, the project only takes on its full significance if one considers its conceptual or even ideological parameters – by which I mean Duncan’s decision to categorise these works not as technical exercises but rather to give them the same dignity as non-imitative writings or, in other words, the proclamation that the act of explicitly and deliberately subordinating oneself to the writing of another is a legitimate writing project. One might say that part of the meaning of the Stein imitations is that Duncan signs them, just as he did the essay “The Homosexual in Society.”⁵ And in these respects, the Stein writings also need to be considered in the context of Pound’s troubling of the concepts of originality and authenticity by way of his mobilisation of translation or, even more, in terms of Spicer’s allegory of dictation in *After Lorca*. But beyond this, let us not forget that these positions also in many ways echo Stein’s own. Stein could almost be defending Hemingway against Lewis when she writes, “Picasso once remarked I do not care who it is that has or does influence me as long as it is not myself” (Stein 355). In this light, one of the most influential aspects of Stein’s writing for Duncan might well be her own openness to influence as such. This perspective might shed new light on Brian Reed’s suggestion that Duncan reads Stein not along the lines of Charles Bernstein, that is, as a “decomposer of language,” but rather as a writer “embedding myths and archetypes within arcane prose” to be read as “esoteric scripture” (Reed 176). For if Reed is certainly right on one level, his assertion begs another question, which would concern the problem of myths and archetypes themselves in Duncan. For example, in “The Truth and Life of Myth,” Duncan opposes the “myth” to what he calls the folktale or fairytale. If myth is concerned with the “movers of the universe and initiators of first mysteries” the folktale and fairytale “have their home in the gossip of old wives and little children, stories about the cooking-hearth and the nursery bedside” (Duncan 2014, 163). Stein, with her “babytalk,” her interest in the domestic, her focus on women’s experience, is for Duncan on the side of the fairy and folktale, to which he also assimilates the Christ story with its cast of humble characters, and Freudian psychoanalysis, which stresses the trivial, the bodily, and the contingent rather than the grand synthetic archetypes of Jung.

- 4 Indeed, as Duncan, much like Spicer, often brackets traditional sources and guarantees of textual meaning – notably the author’s singular or “idiotic” intention, whether conscious or unconscious, or the symbolic coherence of the work seen as a finished, ontologically complete entity – arguably the problem of contingency is at the conceptual centre of any reading of Duncan’s work. And certainly, it is very frequently the contingency of language that is at the heart of much of Duncan’s exploration in the Stein pieces. In this respect, Reed is right that the decision these poems ask readers to make hinges on their position regarding what I take to be Duncan’s fundamentally divided relationship to contingency more broadly. Shall we read in accordance with the Freudian valorisation of the metonymic, the trivial, and the accidental, or by way of a more transcendental and mythopoetic approach, which gathers the limbs of Osiris, as it were, into a coherent whole?⁶ Reed rightly stresses that Duncan explores several

different Steinian modes in his imitations and handles them in several different ways. Indeed, the fact that plausible readings can be built following either of the two alternatives charted by Reed speaks volumes about the forms of “openness” operative in Duncan’s work – an openness leading less to indeterminacy than to undecidability, perhaps. But if a global overview of Duncan’s Stein writings is beyond the scope of this paper,⁷ I want to focus on aspects of the project that engage most intently with language as not only structure but as structure based largely on arbitrary contingencies – work that does seem somewhat out of keeping with the notion of Duncan as the author of “arcane scripture” that Reed powerfully presents. For example, here is the short piece “Making Up,” which I quote in full:

making up to the policeman’s star;
 making up in a crowded bizarre;
 making up for a lack of hair;
 making up the best for a fair one;
 making up what you hadn’t won;
 making up an ode that’s too long;
 making up at the beginning of the song;
 making up as an ape with ears;
 making up for the leap in years;
 making up seem down to all eyes;
 making up a surprise to surprise. (Duncan 2012, 447)

- 5 Obviously, the poem is first of all a simple play on several different meanings of the phrasal verb “to make up”: 1) to reconcile after a quarrel, as in, perhaps “making up in a crowded bizarre” (with a presumably intentional pun on the last word); 2) to invent a story, as in, perhaps, “making up an ode that’s too long”; 3) to compensate for, as in, perhaps, “making up for a lack of hair”; 4) to constitute or form, as in, perhaps, “making up a surprise to surprise”; 5) to try to win the favour of another through ostentatious niceness and deference, as in, perhaps, “making up to a policeman’s star”; 6) to put on make-up, as in, perhaps, “making up as an ape with ears.” Thus, Duncan here points to a polysemy that is in some way random: the differences in meaning that can be expressed by the same phrasal verb cannot be explained by different conceptual understandings of what “making” is. And moreover, none of these meanings are carried by the verb “to make” alone, but only by the unit “to make up,” in which the addition of “up” cannot be read either literally or figuratively in any of the examples (in other words, the structure of “make up,” in all of the above, is in no way similar to “to push on” or “push off,” or “come out,” for example). However, by simply listing these different phrases one after the other, two things happen: first, their distinct meanings tend to get confused, so that in many of the phrases we begin to wonder which meaning of the phrasal verb is invoked. Second, as we begin to attempt to sort out which meaning of the verb to choose, the strangeness of the very construction is foregrounded, as “up” itself is drawn into conversation with the other prepositions – “for,” “to,” “in,” “at,” – which we need in order to understand which use of the phrasal verb is being invoked. Duncan in fact harps on the strangeness of the phrasal construction itself by rupturing it, in the penultimate line, so that “up” is no longer part of the verb at all, but rather its object: “making up seem down.” In other words, this poem is not only about “making up,” in all its meanings, but also about making “up.” Therefore, on one level this is very much a poem about prepositions, and how they attach to verbs to constitute, or make up, “phrasal verbs,” but also how they do not. In terms of thinking about the unmotivated productivity of compound structures,

Duncan does something analogous in a line from "Rings," another Stein imitation: "Out: land, house, cry; side, man. Outriders" (Duncan 2012, 486).

- 6 However, in some ways still closer to "Making Up" is another poem from the same section in *Writing Writing*, titled "Turning Into." This text consists of twenty lines, each beginning with the words "turning into," which play on the phrase's two different meanings: that of physically changing direction to enter a space, and that of becoming something different. Thus, "turning into a long avenue; / turning into a lady reclining" (Duncan 2012, 446). This piece makes manifest a rhetorical figure which underlies "Making up" also: syllepsis, or the yoking together of differing constructions so that the reader is required to recode the syntax as she reads. Syllepsis might be likened to a pun, but with the difference that it depends not on the similarity of sound of two different words, but rather – as seen in "Making Up" and "Turning Into" – on the radical difference of meaning of two identical constructions. While syllepsis is often associated with Pope, Ben Lerner's poetry shows that it is alive and well in the 21st century, as seen in a turn of phrase like "You asked if I would enter the data like a room" (Lerner 2004, 1) or "For I could not throw my voice / away" (Lerner 2010, 6). In other words, what Duncan is working with here, as in many of the Stein pieces, is frankly a kind of wit – an element which is far more notable in Duncan's work generally than the more popular conception might credit. And here, I would argue, we return to the question of women's writing in modernism. For Duncan can be seen here to be foregrounding a certain kind of Steinian "logopoeia" – the element of poetry famously defined by Pound as "the dance of the intellect among words" (Pound 1968, 25) and seen therefore as the irreducibly non-transferable element of poetry, tied as it is to the specificities of language and of specific languages, unlike the imagistic and aural aspects of poetry, with links to the visual arts and music respectively. If this term was to become a staple for Pound, deployed prominently in both *ABC of Reading* and "How to Read," he first used it, in 1918, to describe the work of two women poets: Mina Loy and Marianne Moore. "These two contributors [...] write logopoeia" Pound declares, continuing "It is a mind cry, more than a heart cry" (Pound 1973, 424). Important work by Peter Nicholls and Rachel Blau DuPlessis has carefully examined Pound's original association of logopoeia with specifically women's writing. In that light, I would like to add that Duncan's Stein imitations also help us to reconfigure Stein's place in relation to both the mappings of poetry carried out within the modernist moment and our own mappings of what came to be called modernism. For if on the basis of Pound's division of phanopoeia, melopoeia, and logopoeia, we choose to consider Stein, no less than Moore, Loy, or T. S. Eliot, as an arch-practitioner of the latter, these maps shift considerably. That is, if Stein becomes an exemplar of a manner of writing cast as encapsulating the highest degree of modernist self-aware critical intelligence rather than, as Lewis styles her, a purveyor of incessant, atavistic, primitivistic, childish prattle, the effect is more than that of recuperating Stein for the project of high seriousness. For beyond and more important than that, precisely, is the revaluation of the childish, the insistent, the unbound, and the unmastered themselves that was Duncan's aim in *The H.D. Book* – not to champion these as unmediated truths to mobilise against false sophistication, but rather to unbind and release the forms of intellect, and of dance, within them. Though Stein herself might not have wished to endorse such a reading, it is arguable that her practice was deeply embedded itself in a massive revaluation of such concepts. As Bob Perelman has noted about Stein, "it needs to be remembered how opposed to, or indifferent to, general ideas of exactitude, efficiency,

and ‘good writing’ her own writing is” and he goes on to stress its “features that could be labelled errors or weaknesses, or else praised as challenges to conventional notions of good and bad” (Perelman 131). These same observations, of course, could be applied to Duncan, not only because of his frequent defences of sentimentality, excess, error, or everything implied by the very idea of “permission,” but also because his closest collaborators saw him as engaged in an identical project. “The trick naturally is what Duncan learned years ago and tried to teach us,” Spicer writes in a letter to Blaser in *Admonitions*, acknowledging Duncan’s priority in thinking through the procedural poetics which eschew the goal of the “perfect poem” and lead to seriality. “This is where we were wrong and he was right,” Spicer continues, “but he complicated things by saying that there is no such thing as good or bad poetry” (Spicer 163). It’s not certain that Duncan ever said exactly that, and Stein most certainly did not, but they both, willingly or not, bequeathed a complication of that distinction as part of their legacy. What Stein and Duncan share is a mode of resistance to poetry that is quite unlike the violence of, say, Eliot or Pound, who, while willingly engaging in practices that might have been deemed “anti-poetic,” did so with the goal of forging new transcendences. Spicer’s recognition of this aspect of Duncan, coming 5 years or so after the heart of Duncan’s Stein work from the early fifties, makes Duncan’s inclusion of Spicer in those very works all the more interesting.

Terrible Jack Spicer

- 7 The earliest collection of Stein writings in *The Collected Early Poems* is *Names of People: Stein Imitations of 1952*. As the title implies, many (but by no means all) of the poems contain proper names, frequently chosen from among Duncan’s circle in the Bay Area, such as “Lilly Fenichel” (Duncan 2012, 420), “Kenneth and Marthe Rexroth” (*ibid.* 431), or Duncan’s own life companion, “Jess Collins” (*ibid.* 423). Often the names are simply dropped in the poem like objects in and of themselves – that is, the title “Names of People” (also the title of the first poem in the book) needs to be read literally. These poems do not refer to people by their names as much as structure themselves through the category of the proper name, as opposed to the common noun. Thus “Names of People” begins:

Names of people. Lilly Fenichel.
Lilly Fenichel. Names of people.

George Racket. Parker Parker.
Ambrose Bierce. Adrian Wilson. (*ibid.* 420).

- 8 This poem also contains the line “Who will forget kindly Jack Spicer?” which is followed by three homologous ones: “Who will forget Old Black Joe? / Who will forget the David Barys? / Who will forget Brock Brockway to show?” (*ibid.* 420). If this is the book’s dominant mode, nonetheless some poems – or sections of longer ones – do break with this, notably a work with the title “Upon his Return.” This poem, entirely concerned with Spicer (who had indeed returned to the Bay Area in 1952 after around 18 months in Minnesota) might be thought of as an “imitation” of Stein works like “Susie Asado”; though very different in important ways, we can see it as Duncan’s version of the famous Steinian “portrait.” But formally, it’s interesting for other reasons too. For example, it refers to the earlier poem “Names of People” by citing one of that poem’s lines near the end: “But then I declared: / Who will forget kindly Jack

Spicer" (Duncan 2012, 424), as if the second poem were in fact recounting the scene which culminated with the act of uttering "Who will forget kindly Jack Spicer" as recorded in the first. That is, taken with its predecessor, "Upon his Return" creates a kind of mise-en-abyme, in which the first poem is no longer a poem, but an act, the performance of which the second poem recounts. In this way, "Upon his Return" is at least partly about not only language generally but more specifically enunciation, cast as act and scene, as a line from an earlier poem "returns" and is recalled not as a fragment of language but as an act of saying. The effect of this, generally, is to cast *Names of People* in a slightly different light from many of Duncan's Stein writings, or the writings of Stein herself. Against the abstraction and monumentality of much of Stein, for which the critical analogue has long been the cubist painting (although there is also a sculptural quality to the way words in Stein can feel like blocks of matter), *Names of People* consistently evokes language also as scene and act – as dynamic.⁸ And this sense of dynamics carries over to Duncan's "portrait" of Spicer also, in that therein the latter is depicted largely as the vessel of the interplay of raging contradictory forces. In this vein, the poem begins with the expression of an inbuilt contradiction: "They said terrible Jack Spicer / was a nicer kind sprite / of earth" (Duncan 2012, 424). In terms of aural structure, these lines are difficult: the full rhyme Spicer-nicer and the repeated rhythmic figure which accompanies the delivery of the rhyme words encourage us to over-emphasize the rhythm, as we might in a nursery rhyme. Yet immediately following, the phrase "nicer kind sprite of earth" – odd syntactically in the way "nicer" modifies "kind" – completely disturbs the rhythmic pattern that seemed to be taking shape. This parallels, of course, the disjunction between "terrible" and "nicer kind sprite," which could also be taken as a disjunction between what "they said" and what "terrible" Jack Spicer might really be. While in terms of structure, the following nineteen lines which discuss Jack Spicer can all reasonably be read as belonging to the group of things governed by the phrase "they said," the poem does not harp on this, and it's just as reasonable to read them as in fact belonging to the poem's implicit first-person voice. Except, shortly before the poem's rather gnomic end, we very abruptly find this interjection:

They said. But then I declared:

Who will forget kindly Jack Spicer. (Duncan 2012, 424)

- 9 These lines, of course, disrupt the idea that the opposition between the "terrible" Jack Spicer and the "kind nicer sprite" is due to viewpoint, as it's the "I" and not the "they" that adopts the predicate "kind" here. But the poem's phoney contradiction between differing points of view parallels the contradictions that characterise Spicer himself in this work. "Calvinist goliard," the poem calls him, casting Spicer's iconoclastic rejection of bourgeois inhibitions in favour of an apparent hedonism, as well as his disdain for conventional pieties, as in fact a form of violent self-discipline or even self-denial. In this vein, and even more resonantly, the poem goes on to categorise Spicer's writing as "a poetry / refusing itself like a comet / with a tail of tin cans" (Duncan 2012, 424).
- 10 This representation of Spicer's project of lyric (self)-sabotage is acutely insightful as well as prescient. It is arguable that in 1952 Duncan understood Spicer's writing more than Spicer did himself. But I would like to suggest that in the Stein project more broadly, Duncan also, at least in part, displays a kinship with Spicer, and a lasting one. As Duncan's vocabulary of "orders," "law" and "submission," indicates, his celebrated "permission" never existed outside a dialectic which also included limits and refusals. And the Stein writings are one of the places where, like Spicer, Duncan examines the

conditions in which a poetry can refuse itself, as part of the poetic. For Duncan, as well as for Pound in his understanding of logopoeia, there is undoubtedly a dialectical recuperation, where the ironic and mediated logopoetical negation and deflation of lyrical transcendence becomes the poetic itself. And as Rachel Blau DuPlessis has brilliantly argued, Pound's recuperation of logopoeia, for example in "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley," also entails a rejection of the "feminist critique" with which the logopoetical writing of Moore and Loy was inextricably bound (DuPlessis 38-39). What I would like to suggest here is that Duncan's logopoetical reading of Stein queers – or more fully queers – this logopoetical feminist critique, also pushing it closer to the more radical Dada assaults on the aesthetic, themselves more consonant with Stein than with Loy or Moore. Duncan's writing through Stein, then, while extending a problematic which reaches back to the heyday of Anglo-American modernist poetics, also signals the transition to a more largely post-war problem of how poetry can, and why it might feel it must, refuse itself; a problematic which, if central to Spicer, also appears in other forms in poets as diverse as Creeley, Ashbery, Bob Kaufman, Susan Howe, or Ben Lerner, to say nothing of conceptual writing, or the Language movement. Indeed, posed in these terms, the question risks becoming too large. Restraining ourselves to the dialogue between Duncan and Spicer, it is perhaps more useful to suggest that the question Duncan works through here and elsewhere is whether permission is broad enough to permit its own interdiction. That question is also the plaintive, arguably Calvinist gauntlet that Spicer never ceased to lay down before Duncan, petulantly, provocatively, but with serious intent, as they both worked toward a poetry that as Spicer put it would be "led across time not preserved against it" (Spicer 122). This would be a poetry made to resist the mummified preservation in amber that worries Pound in "Mauberley," or the ideal transcendence of accident that Eliot sought for in his "objective correlative," or its new-critical translation into the figure of the "well wrought urn." In a parable of the dangers of discipleship, this is a temporality – that of what Spicer would soon call the "time-mechanic" as opposed to the embalmer (Spicer 122) – that Duncan presents Spicer's epigones as having missed:

That Calvinist goliard
 watcht all his boys grow up
 to fit his words.
 Like Basketball Heroes advertising
 Donald Duck orange juice
 its bright goodness frozen alive
 for morning repasts of grumpiness. (Duncan 2012, 424)

- 11 This shows that learning derivativeness too is an art, and Duncan's challenge is for us to think derivativeness as an accomplishment rather than as a form of servility, while at the same time abandoning the dichotomies of mastery/servitude and activity/passivity on which such judgements are based. In these ways too, Duncan's thought dialogues with Spicer's insistence that dictation requires something very different from passivity on the part of the poet.
- 12 Meanwhile, if we more readily associate a poetics of wit with Spicer than with Duncan (think only of the importance of Donne and Dickinson for the former, for example) further investigations of Duncan might consider not only the edge of his humor, but a Freudian "Witz" in addition to wit, in the prose as well as the poetry. In *The H.D. Book*, Duncan brings Olson's famous comments on the syllable in "Projective Verse" into dialogue with lines from H.D. evoking "anagrams, cryptograms, / little boxes,

conditioned // to hatch butterflies” (cited by Duncan in Duncan 2011, 274). Duncan goes on to write, “In the revelation of psychoanalysis there had been a trick between the mind and the ear, and incest or insect of that brother to this sister, the syllable that hid the pun within the word” (*ibid.*). Following Freud, Duncan here stresses the pun as a means for the repressed to return, as in slips of the tongue. In this context both puns and slips also overlap with the mechanisms of dreaming. Yet in his book on jokes Freud introduces a crucial distinction. “A dream is a completely asocial mental product,” he writes, “it has nothing to communicate to anyone else” (Duncan 2011, 238). A joke, on the other hand, “is the most social of all mental functions that aim at a yield of pleasure. [...] its completion requires the participation of someone else in the mental process it starts” (Duncan 2011, 238). The joke, with its need of another for the procurement of pleasure, is therefore irreducibly social and erotic. And in this respect, it is a crucial vector for the kind of sociality that Spicer and Duncan wanted their writing not only to represent, but to enact. From this perspective, Duncan and Spicer certainly differ from Stein as much as they do from Lewis or Hemingway. Freud repeatedly discusses how jokes often create a complicity between teller and hearer with respect to an absent third, who is the target of the aggressivity the joke-form permits to be expressed. In his show of submission to her, is Duncan’s joke ultimately “on” Stein? Perhaps. At the same time, the logopoetic writing of Moore, Loy, and Duncan too at last point to the possibility of a complicity of pleasure that would not be grounded on the premise of an excluded and abjected third. And Duncan’s embracing of derivativeness can also be seen as a first rejection of that economy.

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NOTES

1. For an excellent account of Duncan as a derivative poet, see Stephen Collis' introduction to the edited volume, *Reading Duncan Reading: Robert Duncan and the Poetics of Derivation* (2012). See also Nathaniel Mackey's pathbreaking "Gassire's Lute" in *The Paracritical Hinge* (2005) for more on this.
2. For a more detailed account of Lewis's reading of Hemingway's relationship to Stein, see my *American Modernism's Expatriate Scene* (100-107).
3. I do not wish to imply that I consider "modernist ideology" to be a single, coherent entity, far from it. Among the major tenets associated with modernism one finds contradictions not only within particular groupings of writers, but even within individual writers and, in fact, within individual works! That said, certain constellations of values do consistently emerge, and in Lewis and Pound, for example, one frequently finds grouped together as a logical unit notions of individual genius, newness, originality, self-reliance, independence, phallic potency, and hetero-normative sexuality.
4. Given both the context and Duncan's penchant for odd and archaic usages, I read "barely" here as "nakedly" and not "minimally."
5. When Duncan was given the opportunity to publish "The Homosexual in Society" anonymously he pointedly refused, answering "*the whole thing has no meaning if it is not sign'd*" (original spelling and italics). See Faas 150.
6. By this I mean that while the Jungian tradition, broadly speaking, reads symbols through a metaphorical lens which assumes their meanings are anchored transcendentally, regardless of context, in his work on dreams and hysteria Freud consistently reads symptoms or manifest dream content by way of contingent associations and connections, which it is the goal of "free

association” to reveal (there are of course exceptions). Duncan frequently returns to this strand of Freud's thought, above all in *The H.D. Book* and “The Truth and Life of Myth.”

7. Reed's piece provides an excellent one.

8. With regard to a sculptural quality of Stein, Reed points out that Duncan consistently plays on “Stein” as “stone” in her own work (Reed 169). Meanwhile, it should not be forgotten that the question of temporality I'm stressing here was also a major concern for Stein, though one she approaches in quite different ways.

ABSTRACTS

This article begins by considering Duncan's Stein writings as a criticism of highly invested modernist suppositions regarding originality and mastery, these latter exemplified by Wyndham Lewis's view of Hemingway as castrated and belittled by his inability not to imitate Gertrude Stein. It continues to examine Duncan's mobilisation of syllepsis in his Stein writings, and to relate this figure to the Poundian conception of logopoeia, first elaborated in relation to the writings of Mina Loy and Marianne Moore. This allows for a recontextualisation of Stein within the history of Anglo-American modernist poetry by women, and a consideration of its consequences. The paper ends with a brief examination of the relationship of Duncan and Spicer in their shared but distinct projects of challenging essential tenets of modernist lyric ideology, a project for which Stein proves a crucial resource to Duncan, not least in offering a form of “permission” for the exploration of certain forms of “bad” writing.

Cet essai prend pour point de départ la critique des conceptions modernistes d'originalité et de maîtrise dans les « Écrits steiniens » de Robert Duncan. De telles conceptions s'expriment de façon exemplaire chez Wyndham Lewis qui ne cache pas son mépris pour un Hemingway supposément avili et châtré par son incapacité à ne pas émuler Gertrude Stein. Dans un second temps, nous examinerons la mobilisation de la figure de la syllepse chez Duncan, à la lumière de l'idée poundienne de « logopée », concept à l'origine associé à la poésie de Mina Loy et de Marianne Moore. Ceci permettra de reconsidérer la position de Stein au sein de la poésie moderniste féminine anglo-américaine et d'en examiner les conséquences. Pour conclure, nous considérerons le rapport entre Duncan et Spicer dans leur projet commun de mettre à l'épreuve certains aspects clés de l'idéologie poétique moderniste. Dans ce contexte, nous verrons que Stein offre des ressources précieuses à Duncan, en particulier la « permission » qu'elle accorde à une exploration possible du « mal écrit », base de la transvaluation de la poésie si prisée par Duncan comme par Spicer.

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